	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Notice of Allowability	09/837,341	MATSUDA, KOICHI
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Yemane M. Gerezgiher	2144	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to *09/14/2005*.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are *2, 4 and 5 (renumbered 1-3)*.

3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☒ All   b) ☐ Some*   c) ☐ None   of the:

      1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .

      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * Certified copies not received: _____ .

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application. **THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.

    (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached

      1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____ .

    (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____ .

    Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____

4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material

5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____ .

7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment

8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

9. ☐ Other _____ .

MARC D. THOMPSON
Marc Thompson
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1.   An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the

changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be

filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an

amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone

interview with Mr. Lee Stepina on September 28, 2005.

The application has been amended as follows:

• Please cancel **claim 3** and amend **claim 2** as follows:

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): An information processing apparatus connected

to a server along with other information processing apparatuses through a

network and which is supplied with a shared virtual space, said information

processing apparatus comprising:

an inputting unit configured to allow a user to input strings of characters

constituting a chat carried on via an avatar which is active in said shared

virtual space as an incarnation of said user;

a transmitting unit configured to transmit said strings of characters

input through said inputting means unit to said server as character data;

a converting means for converting said character data coming from said

server into audio data including a correspondence table storing means for

storing a correspondence table in which character data are made to correspond

with audio data; and a processing means for referencing said correspondence

table storing means so as to convert character data transmitted from said

server into the corresponding audio data; ~~and~~

an output configured to audibly output said audio data converted by said

converting means[.]; **and**

correspondence table updating means which, in response to a query

from said server, transmits to said server an ID representing a type of said

correspondence table stored in said correspondence table storing means,

wherein, if said server returns an updated correspondence table in

response to said ID transmitted thereto, then said correspondence table

updating means stores said updated correspondence table into said

correspondence table storing means.

- Please amend **claim 4** as follows:

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): An information processing method for use with

an information processing apparatus which is connected to a server along with

other information processing apparatuses through a network and which is

connected to a server along with other information processing apparatuses

through a network and which is supplied with a shared virtual space, said

information processing method comprising the steps of:

allowing a first user to input strings of characters constituting a chat

carried on via an avatar which is active in said shared virtual space as an

incarnation of the first user;

storing audio data and strings of characters in a correspondence table

such that the audio data is made to correspond to the strings of characters;

transmitting said strings of characters input in said inputting step to

said server as character data;

receiving strings of characters from the server sent by a second user;

searching whether the correspondence table contains any audio data

corresponding to said strings of characters received;

converting said character data coming from said server into audio data;

~~and~~

audibly outputting said audio data converted in said converting step as a

voice of the avatar representing the second user[.] **; and**

correspondence table updating means which, in response to a query

from said server, transmits to said server an ID representing a type of said

correspondence table stored in said correspondence table storing means,

wherein, if said server returns an updated correspondence table in

response to said ID transmitted thereto, then said correspondence table

updating means stores said updated correspondence table into said

correspondence table storing means.

• Please amend **claim 5** as follows:

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A storage medium which stores a computer-

readable program for use by an information processing apparatus which is

connected to a server along with other information processing apparatuses through a network and which is supplied with a shared virtual space, the program comprising the steps of:

allowing a first user to input strings of characters constituting a chat carried on via an avatar which is active in said shared virtual space as an incarnation of said user;

storing audio data and strings of characters in a correspondence table such that the audio data is made to correspond to the strings of characters;

transmitting said strings of characters input in said inputting step to said server as character data;

receiving strings of characters from the server sent by a second user;

searching whether the correspondence table contains any audio data corresponding to said strings of characters received;

converting said character data coming from said server into audio data; ~~and~~

audibly outputting said audio data converted in said converting step as a voice of the avatar representing the second user[.] **; and**

correspondence table updating means which, in response to a query from said server, transmits to said server an ID representing a type of said correspondence table stored in said correspondence table storing means, wherein, if said server returns an updated correspondence table in response to said ID transmitted thereto, then said correspondence table

updating means stores said updated correspondence table into said correspondence table storing means.

Allowable Subject Matter

2.   Claims 2, 4 and 5 (renumbered 1-3) are allowed.

3.   The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

None of the prior art of record taken singularly or in combination taught or suggested a chat session carried on via an avatar (a virtual reality) as a personification of the user in a shared virtual space, by receiving a string of characters inputted via the inputting unit; transmitting the inputted strings of characters to a server as character data; and converting the character data coming from the server into a corresponding audio data in accordance with a correspondence table having therein character data corresponding with respective audio data; and audibly outputting the audio data; further in combination with means of updating the correspondence table by transmitting an ID that identifies the type of the correspondence table to the server in response to a query imitated by the server, and if the server returns an updated correspondence table associated with the transmitted table ID, storing the up to date correspondence table.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should

preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yemane M. Gerezgiher whose telephone number is (571) 272-3927. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM Mon - Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached at (571) 272-3923. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MARC D. THOMPSON

Marc Thompson

PRIMARY EXAMINER

Yemane M. Gerezgiher
Patent Examiner, Computer Science